

presence of U.S. forces in Iraq, those that will be training Iraqi forces, those that will provide logistical support, and those that would conduct counterterrorism operations, our special operations troops.

But, essentially, what we would also like to do, which is so critical, is to begin this transition from a predominantly military response to a nonmilitary one. During and after the phased redeployment of U.S. forces from Iraq, the United States will need a sustained nonmilitary effort to actively support reconstruction, governments, and a durable political solution.

One significant reason why our military is stuck in Iraq today is because we have not made an appropriate nonmilitary effort. The administration has bungled reconstruction. They have yet to deploy more than 4 provisional reconstruction teams in the almost 18 provinces in Iraq. They continue to lag behind in terms of political mentoring, in terms of reconstruction, in terms of economic activity. They have done nothing.

As a result, the only real viable tool we have is military forces. And the commanders will tell you on the ground that they are just buying time, that without this nonmilitary effort, all of our plans for Iraq will not succeed.

Any effort like this requires popular support. Popular support rests upon candor with the people. This administration has not been candid with the people. They have not been candid with respect to the costs of this war. And those costs will go up.

Indeed, to stay the course, we can predict billions and billions and billions of more dollars. They have not been candid with respect to the length of our operations. They have not been candid with respect to the impact of these operations on our troops. They have substituted slogans for candor.

This amendment gives the President an opportunity to present a plan not only to the Congress but to the American people, a plan that will be candid, a plan that will strive for victory, a plan of his making. Without such a plan, we will continue to drift, and the chances of success will continue to diminish.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I yield myself the remaining time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Five minutes 11 seconds.

Mr. LEVIN. I thank the Presiding Officer.

Mr. President, there is much we all agree upon in this body. We have an interest in the stability of Iraq. And we want to improve the chances of success in Iraq. The disagreement is over whether the present course, with its open-ended commitment to maintain our military presence in Iraq, as we now have it, contributes to that stability or whether or not we must prod the Iraqis to do what only they can

do—come together to end the insurgency and to avoid an all-out civil war.

The President of Iraq, Mr. Talabani, a few months ago, said the following about what Iraqis believe. He said that Iraqis believe that U.S. forces are ready “to stay as long as we ask them, no matter what the period is.”

That perception on the part of the President of Iraq, reflecting the view, presumably, of many Iraqis, that the United States is “ready to stay” as long as the Iraqis ask us, no matter what the period is, is a perception which must end. It is a perception that was based on our administration’s commitment, which was open-ended, unlimited, unconditional.

Iraqis must make a choice. It is a choice that our blood and our treasure has given them. The Iraqis, and the Iraqis alone, can unite to avoid all-out civil war, by making the political power sharing that needs to be done. Only the Iraqis can decide that they are going to divide the resources equitably so that they can bring in all the groups and the insurgency and avoid an all-out civil war. Only the Iraqis can unite to remove the militia control of the police.

Their unity can do that. We cannot do that for them. We have given them an opportunity. Mr. President, 2,500 American lives, 7 times as many American wounded, have given them an opportunity. They must make a choice: Do they want a nation or do they want civil war?

To maintain this open-ended commitment, which we now have, is contributing to a dependency of the Iraqis on us rather than forcing them, prodding them, to do what only they can do to build a nation.

The Levin-Reed sense-of-the-Congress amendment proposes that a phased redeployment of U.S. troops be begun by the end of this year. Our amendment does not establish a fixed ending date for redeployment. It does not propose a fixed timetable once the phased redeployment has begun. But while it does not establish a timetable, it does establish a fixed time for the beginning of a phased redeployment by the end of this year. It is not precipitous. It is by the end of this year begin a phased redeployment of American troops.

Mr. President, the National Security Adviser of Iraq has been quoted a number of times on the floor.

Do I have a minute?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. One minute 5 seconds.

Mr. LEVIN. I thank the Presiding Officer.

The National Security Adviser of Iraq said the following in yesterday’s Washington Post: We envisage the United States troop presence by year’s end to be under 100,000. That is a reduction of 30,000. That is totally in keeping with what the Levin-Reed amendment proposes. That is the Iraqi envisioned timetable. We want to hold them to that vision for their sake and for ours.

Then Mr. Rubaie, the Iraqi National Security Adviser, said the following—and these are words which every one of us should soak in—that the removal of foreign troops will legitimize Iraq’s Government in the eyes of its people.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator’s time has expired.

Mr. LEVIN. Let us do that in a way which is thoughtful, orderly, and planned. And that is what the Levin-Reed amendment proposes.

I thank the Chair. And I thank my good friend from Virginia, our chairman, for the way in which this debate has been handled on both sides.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia is recognized.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, with regard to the pending amendment, I would only say, in response to the extra 10 seconds you had, I would hope that security adviser was in consultation with our Government at the time he made those remarks to determine the authenticity of those remarks.

Now, my understanding is we now turn to an amendment by the Senator from Massachusetts and the Senator from Wisconsin, I believe. Is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous agreement—

Mr. WARNER. Cosponsors of that amendment: the Senator from California, Mrs. BOXER, and the Senator from Vermont, Mr. LEAHY.

I inquire of the manager, in consultation with the proponents of this amendment, first, if we could get some estimate of the time for the introduction of the amendment. And then I would hope we would continue the practice that we have had today by which Senators go back and forth on each side.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I would propose that the Senator from Massachusetts and the Senator from Wisconsin control the time which has been allocated to them. And as to when they bring up their amendment, it would be up to them because, as I envision this, they and you or your designee would manage that time.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I intend to remain. I do not know that there is a time agreement on this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair is unaware of a time agreement at this time.

Mr. WARNER. In other words, we are in an unusual situation. Now, maybe the distinguished colleague from Massachusetts can help advise his leadership and me as to the time. It would be helpful because, like colleagues on this side, there are commitments on our side with regard to what Members wish to do this evening.

So I am just trying to strike a note of comity so that we can accommodate those Senators on both sides of the aisle who are anxious to participate in this debate.